

March 27, 2006

Afghanistan *Freedom* Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan *Watch*



Maintainers keep planes on the prowl

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Air Force Airman 1st Class Ben Davis refuels a B-52 Stratofortress bomber from a KC-135 Stratotanker on March 13, during a mission supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. The B-52 provides close-air support for ground troops in Afghanistan. Davis is a boom operator assigned to the 28th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron.

Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Douglas Nicodemus
40th Air Expeditionary Group

Cover: A Navy Prowler maintainer examines the plane for loose rivets during a preflight inspection.

Photo by Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste
19th Public Affairs Detachment

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Afghanistan Freedom Watch

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan

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American governors tour Afghanistan, meet troops

By Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste
19th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP EGGARS, Afghanistan -- Four American governors toured Afghanistan March 15 and 16.

Govs. Kenny Guinn of Nevada, Phil Bredesen of Tennessee, Jim Douglas of Vermont and Tim Kaine of Virginia came to Afghanistan to meet service members from their respective states and view the progress being made in Afghanistan's journey toward democracy.

The governors began their tour by visiting U.S. Embassy officials, Afghan governors and Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The governors also attended briefings on the progress being made on Afghanistan's infrastructure, education and military operations.

"The trip has been outstanding. By coming here, we've seen the entire operation in a logistics form," Guinn said.

"Progress is impressive, but there is still a lot of work to do," Douglas said. "I've come away with a better understanding of the situation."

The governors got to hear firsthand accounts on how the military executes numerous operations from their own



Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine sits in on a geography presentation at a girls' school near Bagram Airfield on March 16.

states' servicemembers, while eating breakfast at a Camp Eggers' dining facility.

"I thought it was great," said Army Col. Katherine Kasun, Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan studies and analysis collection team chief. "Just sitting down and chatting with Governor Kaine was a great experi-

ence."

After the governors' meal with U.S. troops, they went and visited a local girls' school. They were greeted by the students serenading them with song and presenting them with flowers.

Kaine responded by playing "You Are My Sunshine" on his harmonica.

See GOVERNORS, Page 4

Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week



Afghan cultural tidbit

Thank you

Dari
Tash akur
(tash-ah-kure)

Pashtu
Manuna
(mah-noo-nah)

Under the Taliban regime, only boys were allowed to attend school. Today, boys and girls attend separate primary and secondary schools. In some of the country's major provinces, they attend universities together. About 50 percent of males and 20 percent of females in Afghanistan are literate.

10th Soldier Support Battalion takes finance reins

Photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Rautio



Army Lt. Col. Leo M. Impavido, left, and Army Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen F. Libert prepare to unfurl their battalion colors during a transfer-of-authority ceremony at Bagram Airfield on March 14. The Soldiers of the 10th Soldier Support Battalion are now responsible for providing finance and pay support to Coalition forces throughout the Combined Joint Operations Area. The 10th SSB expects to serve in Afghanistan until 2007. Impavido is the commander of the 10th SSB. Libert is the command sergeant major.

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Rautio
Joint Logistics Command Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Soldiers of the 10th Soldier Support Battalion, from Fort Drum, N.Y., assumed authority for providing finance support to Coalition forces in Afghanistan during a ceremony here March 14. They expect to serve in Afghanistan until 2007.

The 208th Finance Battalion, which for the past year provided pay and disbursing support to Coalition forces across the combined joint operations area, is returning to Mannheim, Germany. During their tour, Soldiers of the 208th participated in 326 finance-support team missions and processed more than \$518 million in transactions.

"Let there be no doubt in your mind that you have had a significant impact in winning the war on terror," Army Col. Larry D. Wyche, the Joint Logistics Command Commander, told them at the transfer-of authority ceremony.

Leaders of the 10th SSB expressed determination to perform equally well.

"The Soldiers of the 10th SSB look forward to being true combat multipliers for our fellow warriors throughout the CJOA (Combined Joint Operations Area)," said Army Lt. Col. Leo M. Impavido, the battalion commander.

"All we want to do is continue the legacy of the battalions before us," said Army Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen F. Libert, the battalion's command sergeant major.

Governors, from Page 3

"You all are always welcome to come visit the class," one student said. "Thanks for improving our situation and please keep improving it."

"What a great sight to see," Guinn said about seeing Afghan girls in school.

Before heading back to the states, the governors went to Bagram Airfield and had lunch with more U.S. troops. The governors took down service members' phone numbers and said they would call their parents to personally thank them for their sons' and daughters' service.

"I wish everyone in America had an opportunity to meet all the troops and see their work," Guinn said.

"It's an honor for me to come here, and I think the U.S. and the world should spread the positive attitude that's here."

More photos, Page 15

Security force targets terrorists, drugs

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan -- The efforts of senior leaders from the Ministries of Defense, Interior and Counter Narcotics are producing more results for the people of Afghanistan. The planning and coordination among the ministries has produced an Afghan National Security Force that is capable of conducting independent operations with minimal support.

Two significant events tested the force's capabilities this month, and they passed. Now they face a third, ongoing challenge that has plagued Afghanistan for decades - the cultivation of poppy crops to produce opium.

The first test was a Taliban and al-Qaida uprising at the Pol-e-Charkhi prison March 2. The security forces quickly and decisively responded, displaying confidence and skill by restoring prison control with no escapes and minimal casualties to prisoners or the security forces.

This potentially-volatile situation, including the command and control function,



Courtesy photo

Sap is extracted from a poppy plant by slitting the pod vertically in parallel strokes with a special knife.

was carried out solely by the ANSF. Its ability to quickly marshal the required forces, and then employ them, is a great step forward on the road to realizing a force that is capable of providing for the safety and security of all Afghans.

The second example of increased ANSF synergy was the successful cordon and search in Khost on March 5. More than 400 Afghan security forces teamed with Coalition forces to simultaneously provide cordon security, reconnaissance patrols and multiple vehicle checkpoints.

See POPPY, Page 7

Parliament official talks law, common ground

By Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste
19th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- A newly-elected member of Afghanistan's parliament spoke through an interpreter with Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan's military lawyers about law in Afghanistan here March 14.

S.G. Phil Kabir Ranjbar, president of the Democratic Lawyers' Union in Afghanistan, expressed his thoughts and concerns on the future of law in Afghanistan.

"There used to be just religious law under the Taliban," Ranjbar said. "The punishments for crimes were barbaric. They were fundamentalists and dwelled in the past. They opposed education and especially opposed human rights. Under new Afghan law, all of that is over. Now we are trying to continue establishing and spreading civil law throughout the country."

The paths Ranjbar suggested the Afghan government and Coalition forces take in bringing civil law to every corner of Afghanistan are similar to the thoughts of CFC-A law staff.

"It was very interesting to note all of the common goals we have," said Army Col. Michael Tobin, the Rule of Law officer with CFC-A.

"Dr. Ranjbar said there were two things the U.S. could do to help establish civil law here. One suggestion was to be aware of how Islamic law is very prevalent and still exists. The other was to assist the Afghan government justice authorities, and to further expose and encourage them to expand democratic ideals."

Not only does Tobin say he respects Ranjbar's goals, he also respects Ranjbar as a leader.

"Dr. Ranjbar is a great example of one of the excellent leaders emerging from Afghanistan," Tobin said. "He's active in reform



S.G. Phil Kabir speaks with a group of military lawyers at Camp Eggers on March 14. Kabir is the president of the Democratic Lawyers' Union in Afghanistan.

efforts, and he's very educated and experienced in law. He's taken initiative to help lead the Afghan government and the people of Afghanistan toward democracy."

Military lawyers of CFC-A said they are thankful for the leadership and work of Ranjbar, and Ranjbar said he greatly appreciates the efforts of CFC-A.

"U.S. and Coalition forces are working for our country. The U.S. helped us in a very critical situation. They aided us from the very bad Taliban," Ranjbar said. "I'm especially thankful for the U.S. helping us build a democratic government."

"I am hopeful you guys will have no more casualties, and I'm glad we can celebrate our common ground," he said.

Enduring Voices

What do you appreciate most about home now that you're deployed?



**Navy Petty Officer
 3rd Class
 Randy Hedderick**
 Bagram Airfield

"Just having the freedom to be able to do what you want."



**Army 2nd Lt.
 Fabian Mendoza**
 Bagram Airfield

"Family. I definitely appreciate time spent with family ... and nice toilets."



**Air Force Staff Sgt.
 Yennetta Taylor**
 Bagram Airfield

"Green grass."



**Air Force Staff Sgt.
 Ayawanna Hassell**
 Bagram Airfield

"I miss having a bathroom of my own."

School opens, brings new hope to villagers

By Army Pfc. James Tamez
19th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Nearly 4,000 boys and girls in Dacodadad village outside of Kabul will have a brighter educational future since the Ghafor Ahmadi High School opened March 25.

"The opening of this school will be a positive effect on the people and their education," said Ahmad Rahim Malik Zai Mirgan, school principal, at the opening ceremony March 15. "Previously, this area was a ruined area. There were no chairs for the students. They were just sitting outside under the tents. They were studying under the very hot sun. It is a big day for this village."

Mirgan said the school will offer educational opportunities for both boys and girls in the surrounding area, including computer classes.

After 25 years of warfare, seeing the school open is a very good thing, he said.

"We celebrate this day as education day for this area," said Abdul Wasi Roshangar, school deputy principal. "The teachers, the students, the villagers ... everybody is pleased with the opening of the school."

Mirgan said the school is expecting nearly 4,000 students over the next year. The classes are first through 12th grade, with student ages ranging from 7 to 20 years old.

"For several years, there were many people who were uneducated in this village," he said. "Previously there was no big school in this area. Since this is the big school in this area, everybody wants to transfer back from other schools and come back here to the school in their village."

The school complex consists of several two-story buildings, complete with bathroom and shower facilities. Both British and American military funds were used to build and provide needed supplies for the school.

"We built the school project for the minister of education here in Afghanistan," said Army Maj. Corteney Callis, executive officer for the Florida National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 116th Field Artillery.

"We put in a computer lab, and there are 13 computers in the lab. We also put in desks for the entire school. There are 18 desks in each classroom."

Callis said the U.S. Army will also provide backpacks and-

school supplies.

Besides providing an educational center for the surrounding area, the building of the high school also has affected the local economy in a positive manner, she said.

"The contractor hired three quarters of the work force from the local village," Callis said. "This puts money back into the economy for the local villagers."

From handing out school

supplies to helping with the building of schools, the major said it is just a part of the overall Coalition effort to help Afghanistan get back on its feet.

"Hopefully by us being here, we have established a sense of stability for the Afghan people," Callis said. "We are trying to help build a better Afghanistan, and, by starting with the schools, we are building from childhood."



(Above) Army 1st Sgt. James Prescott speaks with two students at Ghafor Ahmadi High School on March 15. Prescott is assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 116th Field Artillery Regiment. (Left) Villagers play a game of volleyball after the school's opening ceremony. The new school contrasts starkly to older buildings in the area.



Photos by Army Pfc. James Tamez

Coalition helps Afghans ring in new year

Story and photo
by Army Pfc. Brian Schroeder
Combined Joint Task Force - 76
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Coalition leaders joined Afghan governors from the Kapisa, Parwan and Panjshir Provinces to ring in the Afghan new year at the Jirga Conference Center here March 18.

The Afghan new year, or Norouz, is traditionally held March 21. The joint event was held early so the Afghans could spend the actual holiday with their families. Norouz is the time when Afghans celebrate the renewal of life in nature after the winter months. The philosophy is also carried over into the personal lives of Afghans as well.

"People across our country are celebrating the new year because this is the time of year the plants have a rebirth and people do the same," said Kapisa Province Gov. Murad. "This is the time to forget about past animosities and begin a new year, a new life and a new vision."

Afghans show their renewal of life by whitewashing the walls of their homes and cleaning their property to give a new and revived appearance to the world and a new outlook on the new year ahead.

"People will walk on the new grass and new plants to feel the newness of life," Murad continued. "This gives everybody a new sense of beginning."

Norouz decorations adorned the walls



Army Brig. Gen. Bruce Burda, left, Parwan Province Gov. Taqwa and Army Col. Marvin Schlatter plant a fruit tree to celebrate the Afghan new year. Burda is the Air Component Command Element commander, and Schlatter is the Task Force Tiger commander.

and colored eggs and flowers were placed on the tables at the Jirga Conference Center. Time-honored traditional Norouz food, such as Jalabe, a honey flavored candy, was also served with the new year's lunch. The 10th Mountain Division jazz ensemble performed as well.

This year's Norouz celebration marks the first time Coalition leaders have gathered with Afghans to celebrate the

new year together.

"The events today displayed a show of friendship with the Afghan people and their government to show we care about them and we are culturally aware," said Army Maj. Mary Harlan, Task Force Tiger information operations officer. "Events like these bring us closer, and we can see other cultures face-to-face and have a better understanding of the Afghan culture."

As a symbol of growth and stability between the Afghans and Coalition, the governors and Coalition leaders planted three fruit trees in the conference center courtyard to represent the three provinces at the celebration.

"On my family farm we used to say that you plant the corn and beans to eat at the next meal and you plant trees for our children and grandchildren," said Army Col. Marvin Schlatter, Task Force Tiger commander. "The trees planted here today symbolize the faith we have in the future for the Afghan people and the future of our partnership together."

Parwan Province Gov. Taqwa wished everyone a happy new year and extended his thanks for the Coalition's hospitality.

"Congratulations on this new year from all of us to all of you," he said. "The past year was a good year because we had peace in our province. I hope the year we have ahead of us is better than the last, and I hope we will be able to celebrate Norouz together next year."

POPPY, from Page 4

The aggressive vehicle and property searches disrupted insurgents' efforts and provided additional security in the region.

While keeping citizens safe from immediate threat, the ANSF is also focusing on another significant challenge threatening the Afghan people - opium.

Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of poppies, and 90 percent of the world's total opium supply comes from this country. Money generated from the poppy cultivation fuels terrorists, criminals and corruption, which prevents vital social

and economic reconstruction efforts needed to provide more critically-needed jobs, schools, hospitals and basic services to the Afghan people.

The poppy eradication campaign has started in the Helmand Province, where the governor and provincial officials developed an eradication plan and are now closely supervising its implementation.

This year, the governor has resources to eradicate poppy in the provinces -- money, equipment, security forces and, where necessary, the central government's Ministry of Interior forces will also be available for further eradication.

This plan is not limited to Helmand, it is a nationwide program designed to end the illegal business that causes addiction and destroys families and communities.

So far, thousands of poppy fields have already been destroyed.

"The governor-led poppy eradication campaign is successfully ongoing in different provinces of the country, and hopefully the eradication will start in Badakhshan Province soon. This shows the government of Afghanistan is committed to eradicating poppies all over the country," said ANSF Lt. Gen. Mohammad Duad, deputy minister for counternarcotics.

Maintainers keep pl

By Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste
19th Public Affairs Detachment
BAGRAM AIRFIELD,

Afghanistan -- Because of the secrecy of a Navy squadron's mission here, many of the maintainers don't know the specifics of what the squadron accomplishes every day.

It is their expertise, technical knowledge and hard work, however, that keep the EA-6B Prowlers mission ready and flying.

"This plane takes a true technician," said Navy Petty Officer

2nd Class Brian Shaw, an aviation electronics technician with the squadron. "You have to, on some level, like this plane to be able to fix it. If you don't want to work on this plane, it's never going to get fixed. Everyone has an affinity for their first car. This is sort of similar."

Maintaining the aircraft may make for a long day, but it is appreciated by the pilots.

"The maintainers hold this operation together," said Navy Lt. Jason Stiefer, a Naval aviator with the squadron. "They work hard at least 12 hours a day for

six months. A lot of times my life is in their hands."

The Prowler maintainers realize what's at stake and do not skimp when it comes to inspecting and working on their plane.

"We make sure everything works before it takes off. We've got to be careful with what we do," said Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Jordan Rose, an air frame structural hydraulic mechanic with the squadron.

Being on their feet seven days a week, carefully going over the plane, can be exhausting,

Rose said.

"The plane's age is a big reason why our hours are so long," Rose said. "For every hour of flight time, the plane needs at least 15 hours of maintenance. Plus, we only have four Prowlers, and we fly them every day."

The maintainers ensure the Prowlers are worthy for flight, and the aviators execute their missions.

"Our mission is very important out here," Shaw said. "I think what we do is the coolest job in the Navy."

An EA-6B Prowler maintainer oversees his crew during a preflight maintenance inspection.



Planes on the prowl



(Above) An EA-6B Prowler airplane sits on the tarmac at Bagram Airfield.

(Left) A pilot inspects an EA-6B Prowler from atop one of its wings.



Navy Prowler maintainers inspect the tarmac to ensure no debris is present that could harm the plane or crew.

Afghan National Army soldiers listen to instructions before marksmanship training Feb. 17



Afghan soldiers ready to take on Taliban

By Army Sgt. Cain Claxton
Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan

-- Special Forces-trained Afghan soldiers, eager to fight Taliban and al-Qaida that creep through the towering crags that surround here, are clearing a path for peace in their country.

The troops of B Company, 2nd Kandak, 1st Brigade, 205th Corps, of the Afghan National Army, beamed with pride and accomplishment Feb. 16, days after capturing two suspected Taliban militants. The captures netted two AK-47 rifles and provided intelligence that might lead them to more enemy activity. Better yet, the weapons are out of the hands of the enemy and into the hands of those who wish to maintain peace in their land.

While media and governments discuss their roles in Afghanistan, the privates in this young but increasingly strong national army talk about killing or capturing the enemy.

"We shot two Taliban here and here," said a young ANA soldier, poking with his finger at the shoulder of another soldier. Another soldier appeared brandishing the pair of confiscated AK-47 rifles.

Members of the SF team working alongside the ANA said the Afghan soldiers bring substantial combat power to the fight.

"You don't want to be (Taliban or al-Qaida) in the room when the ANA goes

to clear (an objective)," said an SF weapons sergeant training the ANA in close-quarters combat and marksmanship Feb. 17.

Through an interpreter, the weapons sergeant explained the basics of marksmanship, to make each shot count. The ANA troops are getting the point.

"Now some of them are proud to say, 'Only two bullets,'" said the SF team sergeant about the ANA's improved marksmanship.

The U.S.-led Coalition has been training the ANA since its inception after U.S. troops toppled the Taliban regime in 2001. The Coalition and government of Afghanistan have worked toward building a 70,000-soldier strong Afghan army.

After five years, the number of ANA soldiers stands at about half that, but the

caliber of the ANA soldiers trained has exceeded expectations, said the ANA's 205th Corps top enlisted soldier, Command Sgt. Maj. Hani Guhaznaway, at the Corps headquarters in Kandahar.

Guhaznaway said his soldiers are bound as a team thanks to their Taliban and al-Qaida enemies.

"All the ANA know the enemy," Guhaznaway said as more than 100 of his troops prepared to move out on a ground convoy to an outpost March 7. "They believe they can finish the enemy. They follow their orders and accomplish their missions quickly and expertly."



(Above) ANA soldiers participate in weapons training Feb. 17 in Zabul Province.

(Right) ANA soldiers stop an approaching truck to check the vehicle for contraband.





American Soldiers participate in the Schützenschnur, a German weapons qualification event, March 15.

Photos by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry

Allies build friendship through marksmanship

**By Army Pfc.
Anna K. Perry
19th Public Affairs
Detachment**

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- A group of 37 American Soldiers and Marines put their marksmanship skills to the test for a German Schützenschnur, a weapons-qualification event, March 15 at the nearby east river range.

"This is a very prestigious event," said Army Staff Sgt. David Sandberg, 831st Transportation Detachment. "It is held only at the invitation of the Germans, which makes it such an honored event, especially here in

Afghanistan."

"The Schützenschnur is one of the oldest military traditions we have in the German [army]," said German Lt. Col. Manfred Latussek, German liaison assigned to the German Liaison Officer Detachment for Combined Joint Task Force - 76. Latussek is one of three German soldiers currently serving at Bagram.

Established in 1720, the Schützenschnur gave Prussian Emperor Friedrich Wilhelm I a way to decorate his best rifle shooters. Over the years, the decoration has evolved. The Schützenschnur shooters' cord was established by the

German Armed Forces in 1965 and is still in use today.

"Shooters are awarded bronze, silver or gold, depending on their results on the firing line," Latussek said.

When held in Germany, the event requires soldiers to qualify on the rifle, pistol, machine gun and anti-tank weapon. However, the regulations have been modified for Afghanistan with agreement from the army command in Germany. This is because only the pistol and rifle are available here, Latussek said.

The American troops were required to hit a number of stationary targets while firing from standing, kneeling and

prone positions. Standards for both the P8 pistol and the G36 rifle had to be met for troops to be awarded the Schützenschnur.

"This is a challenge because Soldiers are expected to fire unfamiliar weapons, with no zeroing or familiarization process," Sandberg said.

Despite the difficulty, the troops walked away with 18 silver awards and 10 bronze awards. Nine did not meet the standard.

The German detachment normally holds a Schützenschnur once a week.

The American troops who attend the event are usually in the top 5 percent of their unit. They have high physical training scores and expert marksmanship on American weapons, Sandberg said.

Both the German and American service members agree that the event is an excellent opportunity to strengthen the bonds between the two nations.

"We do this for our friends, our American comrades," Latussek said.

This is a great chance for the younger troops. They get to interact with their German battle buddies and train on new weaponry, Sandberg said.



(Above) Soldiers, from left, Spcs. Hector Galvan, Juan Gonzalez and Ivan Macias get ammunition for the Schützenschnur, a German weapons qualification event, March 15. The Soldiers are assigned to Company A, 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Division.

(Left) Marine Lance Cpl. Andrew Robida attempts to qualify. Robida is assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines.

Soldiers fight stress, ensure readiness

**By Army Pfc.
James Tamez
19th Public Affairs
Detachment**

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- In an effort to ensure the physical and mental stability of service members, the Combat Stress Control Clinic in Camp Lacy provides services for people and units wanting information on coping with the stresses of being deployed.

"There are two basic types of combat stress," said Air Force Lt. Col. Kent McDonald, officer-in-charge of combat stress control for the 755th Expeditionary Mission Support Group. "Operational combat stress can be caused by a high operational tempo. It can cause sleep deprivation, poor motivation, boredom, burnout and outbursts of anger. Acute combat stress leaves the individual so traumatized from seeing death and destruction around them that they barely function."

"To a degree, combat stress is a totally normal response [to deployments]," said Army Capt. Matthew Barry, 10th Support Brigade Troop Battalion, 10th Mountain Division, division psychiatrist and officer-in-charge of the clinic. "Keeping tabs on the stress level allows an individual to complete the mission more effectively and efficiently."

Barry said there are many causes for combat stress, including the feeling of helplessness because of separation from family and friends for extended periods, adjusting to a new environment and dealing with death and destruc-



Photo by Army Pfc. James Tamez

Army Pfc. Oleg Zaretski works out at Fuller Memorial Fitness Center at Bagram Airfield on March 20. Experts recommend exercise as an effective stress-control measure. Zaretski is assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 10th Aviation.

tion. Even considering all of these negative things, Barry said there is hope.

"Combat stress is treatable," Barry said. "It is not a progressive disease; it is a failure to recover. It is a disorder of avoidance. If people are motivated about getting better, then their chances of recovery are greatly improved."

McDonald said two of the most effective actions to control varying levels of stress are getting about eight hours of sleep a night and increasing physical activity. While everyone is different and everyone copes with stress differently, certain solutions can apply to nearly everyone.

"Exercise has been found to be just as effective as medication when dealing with mild to moderate cases of stress," McDonald said.

"Boredom and monotony are the enemies," Barry said. "Sports help individuals to build relationships with other members of the unit and

build a resiliency against stress."

Barry said church services are excellent stress relievers for religious people. It is also important to keep in touch with family and friends via telephone and email.

McDonald said the importance of good relationships within the unit is vital when the unit is in a combat theater. When the relationships within the unit are good, the people in the unit will have less stress because there will be an emotional support structure nearby.

"Don't neglect your basic needs and make sure others in the unit don't neglect theirs," McDonald said. "There are many things during deployments that are beyond your control. You have to control the things you can control."

With effective leadership, proper education and specific interventions, combat stress is a situation that can be controlled and treated, Barry said.

McDonald said the Army and Air Force are working together to battle combat stress. People from both branches of service operate the clinic, which allows a better pooling of resources. This allows them to be readably available for service members seeking assistance.

The Combat Stress Control Clinic offers other services in smoking cessation, anger management, individual counseling and medication management. The clinic also can facilitate preventative and educational briefings for units.

The Combat Stress Control Team operates a clinic in Camp Lacy and workers make trips to forward operating bases throughout Afghanistan. The clinic hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Representatives are on call 24 hours a day and can be reached by going to sick call. For more information on combat stress, call 231-4639.

Legal office helps troops, Afghans focus on democracy

By Army Pfc.

Anna K. Perry

19th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD,

Afghanistan -- Officials

from the client services office here are working to ensure that service members remain focused on the mission.

The mission of client services is two-fold.

The office handles both legal assistance and legal claims, said Army Capt. Paul Bouchard, office chief.

Legal assistance providers offer a variety of services like simple tax returns, name changes, rebuttals for non-commissioned officer and officer evaluation reports, and reports of survey.

"I'd say the three biggest issues we deal with involve family law, consumer law, and immigration and citizenship questions," he said.

Family law can be anything from child custody to separation matters, Bouchard said.

Consumer law deals with things like car repossessions and wrongful and bad debts, he added.

Besides lending a hand with

family and consumer law issues, the office provides help for people seeking information on citizenship and immigration laws.

"We mostly handle immigration packets for American service members seeking U.S. citizenship, although we will do our best to answer general questions," Bouchard said.

Legal assistance is available to military personnel, military retirees and Department of Defense civilians. Contractors who are American citizens or permanent residents of the United States are eligible to receive affidavits, powers of attorney and notary services.

The office helps service members remain tuned in on the mission. They sleep better at night knowing that their legal problem has been resolved, Bouchard said.

Afghans are also eligible to seek services from the office.

Army Capt. Joseph Dion, chief of the Claims Division, says he deals mostly with Afghans.

"Any damage that [Afghans] suffer at the hands of the American forces that does not



Courtesy photo

Army Capt. Joe Dion and A.J., an interpreter working with the claims office, help an Afghan file a legal claim.

involve combat related activity would be a valid claim and would therefore invoke the claims process," Dion said.

The most common claims by the Afghans include death of livestock and car accidents involving military vehicles, he said.

Although it is not as usual, service members may also file claims.

"Soldiers usually have claims when they've had a personal item come up missing from a (storage container)," Dion said.

Whether or not he's working with Afghans or American service members, Dion said he feels his job is important.

"It's essential that we maintain good terms with the local community, especially if

they've suffered as a result of the American forces," Dion said.

The five-person client services team does not usually travel, but service members at forward operating bases still have access to the services they provide.

"Most of the FOBs have [staff judge advocates] on the ground, and we are willing to take phone calls and e-mails at our office," Bouchard said.

Many of the FOBs also have claims officers or pay agents available.

The client services office will do whatever it takes to keep the mission in the forefront of service members' minds, Bouchard said.

For more information, call 231-4603.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Air Force Maj. Richard W. Jones II, briefs ANA soldiers from the Afghanistan National Army Central Movement Agency on the route they will take for a long-haul convoy mission. Jones is the senior mentor assigned to the 755th Expeditionary Mission Support Group CMA Embedded Training Team.

Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

If you have high-quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.



Aircrews 'fuel the fight' in Afghanistan

**By Air Force
Master Sgt. Scott King
40th Air Expeditionary Group
Public Affairs**

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM -- In six short weeks, deployed KC-135 Stratotankers have delivered more than 11 million pounds of fuel to B-52 Stratofortresses that have flown forward into Afghan airspace to provide close-air support for U.S. and Coalition forces on the ground.

Without this fuel, the B-52s would not be able to carry out this mission, possibly resulting in loss of life for forces conducting their missions on the ground in Afghanistan.

"Our mission of providing fuel to our bombers is a highly effective tool in the global war on terrorism," said Air Force 1st Lt. Bryon Sherriff, KC-135 co-pilot with the 28th



A KC-135 Stratotanker refuels a B-52 Stratofortress. The two aircraft are from a forward-deployed location supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron. "Our airframe, attached with the B-52s, allows global reach and global power to many areas of the world -- including Afghanistan.

"I'm personally highly rewarded being able to fulfill this role that directly affects our nation's future," he said. "Extending the (B-52s) range has a direct influence on the preservation of our freedom."

Flying with a crew of three, a pilot, co-pilot, and boom operator, the stratotanker has a range of 1,500 miles with 150,000 pounds of fuel transfer capability and can fly a ferry mission up to 8,000 nautical miles.

A navigator is also used on special operations air refueling missions because of the complexity of the mission. Nearly all of the tankers' internal fuel can be pumped through its flying boom, the KC-135's primary fuel transfer method. A special shuttlecock-shaped drogue, attached to and trailing behind the flying boom, may be used to refuel aircraft fitted with probes, mostly Navy air-

craft. An operator stationed in the rear of the plane controls the boom or drogue.

Air Force Airman 1st Class Desiree Campbell, a boom operator with the 28th EARS, has been at the controls of tanker booms for less than one year refueling multimillion dollar U.S. and Coalition aircraft.

"So far I've enjoyed being a KC-135 boom operator because it has given me the chance to work with professional people and see different places in the world," she said. "My job is to get the (B-52s) their fuel so they can complete their close-air-support missions and make a difference from the sky over Afghanistan."

Supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, the pilots at a forward-deployed location have flown almost 200 combat support sorties in the past six weeks.

"Our crews are flying four to five times per week with 48 hours of alert duty mixed in, so it's very busy," said Air Force Maj. Nathan Diaz, KC-135 pilot. "The requirement

for aerial refueling is far from being a thing of the past. If you ask anyone that knows anything about air campaigns, air combat, strategic and even tactical warfare, they'll tell you that gas in the sky is the long pole in the tent -- the Air Force cannot conduct airborne operations of any significance without air refueling. That simple fact is what all tanker aircrews and the people that support them take pride in."

The B-52 pilots mirror that same sentiment about the vitality of the Stratotanker.

"Without the KC-135, our mission here would simply not happen," said Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Maryak, 28th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron commander and B-52 pilot. "Every time a forward air controller on the ground in Afghanistan contacts or looks up and sees our bombers, we're well aware that it took at least two KC-135s from this forward operating location to make it happen."

"Whenever we, as B-52 aircrew members, have the opportunity to shape the battlefield with our armament, we realize that it's the fuel from the tanker that got us to the battlefield," he said.

"Our crews are doing a phenomenal job supporting the warfighter. It's not uncommon to find young crewmembers today with more than 2,000 flying hours early in their career," said Air Force Lt. Col. Marc Van Wert, 28th EARS commander and KC-135 pilot. "It's because they have been 'fueling the fight' for multiple worldwide taskings since Sept. 11. We are asking them to fly a great deal to support the warfighter, and they have answered the call time and time again."



Air Force Airman 1st Class Ben Davis fuels a B-52 Stratofortress over the Indian Ocean. B-52s provide close-air support to troops on the ground in Afghanistan. Davis is assigned to the 28th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron.



Photos by Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyesie, 19th Public Affairs Detachment

Left to right, Govs. Phil Bredesen of Tennessee, Tim Kaine of Virginia, Jim Douglas of Vermont and Kenny Guinn of Nevada meet Afghan teachers and schoolgirls during a visit to a girls' school near Kabul on March 16.



Gov. Jim Douglas of Vermont shares a meal with service members at Viper Dining Facility at Bagram Airfield on March 16. Douglas was one of four U.S. governors touring Afghanistan on March 15 and 16.

Students listen as a classmate at a girls' school near Kabul talks about geography. The students met four governors from the United States on March 16.



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“Greatness is more than potential. It is the execution of that potential. Beyond the raw talent, you need the appropriate training. You need the discipline. You need the inspiration. You need the drive.”

-- Eric A. Burns, Gossamer Commons